A ray from the absolute truth can reflect itself only in the pure mirror of its own flame —our highest Spiritual Consciousness. —H. P. BLAVATSKY

THEOSOPHY

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THE TEACHER OF AN AGE

PERIODICALLY, thoughtful individuals who tire of intellectualized religion declare a moratorium on all metaphysics and doctrinal accounts of the nature of things, turning to the subjective reality of individual experience in consciousness as the only key to the truth they seek. There is a sense in which this happened as a result of the Buddhist reform in Indian religion, or Hinduism. In the popular forms of Buddhism, as represented, say, in the *Dhammapada,* the metaphysical content is slight, the reference to traditional doctrine incidental or almost casual. The emphasis of the Buddha's teachings, here, is ethical and psychological. While the transcendental philosophy and complex metaphysical teachings which form the doctrinal side of Mahayana Buddhism are plainly evident in Lamaism, these are an inheritance of the instruction given to Buddha's disciples, and they seem to have suffered the distortions which the great reformer originally sought to avoid.

The oscillations characterizing the Western quest for truth have been quite different in outward form. In Europe, the reaction against Medieval religious belief and the casuistry of scholastic speculation took the form of aggressive scientific materialism. Not psychology and ethics, but devotion to the "book of nature," was the reply given by the scientific spirit to the dogmas of the Church. Instead of direct contact with the world inside, the Western reformers proposed to find "reality" in external nature—by an exhaustive study of the physical universe.

Today, serious moral and intellectual inquiry seems on the brink of another transition. In the West, there is a noticeable exhaustion of the possibilities of "physical" inquiry, and already the new psychologists are refusing to remain imitators of the disciplines of physics and biology. It is becoming obvious to them that the stuff of inner psychological experience must be examined by methods which

are appropriate to its nature. A decision-making form of intelligence is *different* from the reactive intelligence of the material elements, and different, also, from the sensitive behavior of protoplasm and living tissue. The way to make a direct encounter with the reality of consciousness is through the consciousness of the observer. This is plain common sense, and it is beginning to be recognized as such.

How, in relation to these various attitudes and transitions, are we to regard the work of H. P. Blavatsky?

So far as the West is concerned, the initial interest of inquirers into Theosophy was in the doctrines that were progressively outlined in her works. Much of the debate and controversy of the early days of the Theosophical Movement turned on the "teachings," and the enthusiasm of students arose largely from the capacity of those teachings to *explain,* in theoretical or intellectual terms, aspects of nature and human experience which neither science nor religion had dealt with adequately. It seems fair to say that, over the approximately ninety-year period during which these teachings have been available in the world, Theosophy has been identified by them and has spread to a fairly wide currency as a historical and theoretical account of man and the world.

What was more or less neglected, during these years, is H.P.B.'s emphasis on the need for individual *experience,* before there can be any real knowledge. This oversight was, it might be said, quite natural. Western thought during this time developed the full implications and possibility of the rational temper, and Theosophy was of necessity interpreted according to rational criteria and accepted on rational grounds. There was nothing wrong with this, since Theosophy makes a profound appeal to the rational nature, and the theoretical side of any serious quest for knowledge is quite indispensable, if the mind is to be kept open and the tendency to jump to short-range conclusions is to be controlled. Today, however, the excesses of speculative rationalism are becoming so obvious, even at the political level, that a basic skepticism of all rational constructions is an almost habitual reaction. It follows that "logical demonstrations" are no longer impressive, nor are they accepted as any sort of "proof."

On the other hand, it is gradually being admitted that the demonstrations which *are* acceptable—those giving objective, experimental evidence—are not really practicable in the psychological and social

sciences. The quality of human feelings, on which mental and moral health so often depends, cannot be exhibited on a slide or subjected to statistical manipulation. Psychology, which for long years tried to be a science, is now reconciling itself to an intuitive and introspective approach, and, as a modern scholar recently pointed out, is very close to becoming a branch of the Humanities, in which art, rather than the "measuring" sort of science, is the basis of achievement. So it is that psychologists are learning how to listen with their "inner ear," and to become sensitive to nuances of meaning that have been neglected for centuries.

However, this tendency among psychologists is more interesting as a symptom of changes in attitude in the culture at large than for its importance in the evolution of psychology. The arts and literature are showing a similar inclination, and while some of the results, during the transition, are puzzling to the layman and ordinary reader, the new enthusiasm for subjectivism in the arts should eventually gain a semblance of order, as the artists themselves find it necessary to return to a rationalism appropriate to the meanings they find emerging in this way.

It is now, in this interlude of confusion created by the general longing for intuitive understanding, that the other side of H.P.B.'s teachings may be more fully recognized and valued by Theosophical students. Her emphasis on direct-knowledge, the orientation she provides, as in *The Voice of the Silence,* concerning the psychic and the spiritual states, and her various treatises on the idea of "truth," distinguishing between the approximate accuracy of teachings and the wholeness of direct perception—all these counsels and warnings have acquired a pertinence that could be apparent in the nineteenth century to only a very few.

Theosophists who gain from the skepticism of the age a deepened appreciation of the vanity of intellectualizing have opportunity to find that H.P.B. did all she could to guard against this sort of display of "information" about recondite teachings. And they may see, again, the absolute necessity of metaphysics as a kind of chart for those who would solve the mysteries of the inner life by becoming more aware of their inner states and subjective processes.

It is in this balance of the Theosophical teachings, as we have them from H.P.B., that one finds an indication of her stature as an educator and instructor for an entire age.

PROEM

XIII

CAUSATION in the abstract sense is presented on the opening page of Proem in the symbol of the "Point." Time and Space and Causality, as we know them, having passed through the "Night" of the Universe, or *Pralaya,* are abstractly present for the on-coming "Day" of the Universe, or *Manvantara.*

Causation is said to be "a philosophical term for the operation of causes and for the mental conception of cause as operative throughout the universe." Implicit, here, is the related idea of an *expanding* universe, not a universe which becomes "larger," but one which grows in the mind through an ever-deepening perception of the operation of causes. It makes of every thinking being a potential philosopher.

Causation is, perhaps, one of those Ideas "impacted in the imperishable center of man's nature"—to use a phrase of Wm. Q. Judge in *The Ocean of Theosophy*—since it is universally comprehended, or apprehended. The child's first desire to witness repetition of a phenomenon is evidence of an innate belief that "something" can make it happen again. The natural curiosity of the growing child is voiced in ancient questions that are eternally new: "What makes it *go?*" "How did it *get* that way?" "Where did it come from?" The maturing mind searches for meaning in its own way: the quest for a beginning, some *starting* point; endless examination of problems and processes, for, whatever comes about, there is something that *precedes;* and the disturbing mystery of persistence and apparent purposiveness in the seemingly blind acts of Nature—what Intelligence moves thus, and to what undisclosed end?

Opinions as to the nature of Cause differ, depending upon individual intelligence, perception, and established values. The religionist, unquestioningly, may refer everything to God as Cause, while the atheist denies the very existence of God. But points of view—"differences of individual opinion"—do not alter common recognition that any circumstance or condition or action is the result of some agent or power.

Confusion concerning causation arises as the illusionary nature of the physical world is discerned. This discovery at once puts the problem "on another plane," where it in fact belongs. The illusionary world is the world of *appearances* and one needs to look beyond appearances for meaning—*what* makes the plant respond to sunlight, *what* prompts the flight of birds on their cyclic journey, *how* does the creature of nature know when to hibernate? This reflection brings, simultaneously, awareness of the illusionary "physical" man, the constantly changing form, or body. Its relation to the Real Man is clearly stated in *The Ocean of Theosophy* (p. 34):

> The Real Man is the trinity of Atma-Buddhi-Manas, or Spirit and Mind, and he uses certain agents and instruments to get in touch with nature in order to know himself. These instruments and agents are found in the lower Four—or the Quaternary—each principle in which category is of itself an instrument for the particular experience belonging to its own field, the body being the lowest, least important, and most transitory of the whole series. For when we arrive at the body on the way down from the Higher Mind, it can be shown that all of its organs are in themselves senseless and useless when deprived of the man within. Sight, hearing, touch, taste, and smelling do not pertain to the body but to the second unseen physical man, the real organs for the exercise of those powers being in the Astral Body, and those in the physical body being but the mechanical outer instruments for making the co-ordination between nature and the real organs inside.

The maturing mind adapts its philosophy to a *metaphysical* world, and as the problem enlarges, the *psychological* aspect of all manifestation is sensed, with its complexities of causation. First, in one's self, simply, since "there is no Karma (action) unless there is a being to make it or feel its effects." No being acts alone. No action can be completely isolated. The present is an unfolding past and holds the potential future. Such awareness provides a sound sense of continuity and a fitting frame of mind for considering Universal Causation where, as Proem indicates, *beginning* of a Period of manifestation is at the same time an ancient continuity, for the "great Law of continuity rules the Universe."

The Point-symbol "denotes the dawn of differentiation"—the distinguishing sign, or abstract symbol of the *Day*-to-come. It represents the Unmanifested Cause—the "forever concealed, primeval triune differentiation, not *from,* but *in* the *One Absolute.*"

The Germ "which will become the Universe" represents the *dy-*

namics of manifestation—the stage depicted in Stanza IV from the *Book of Dzyan*. This stage of evolution is spoken of in Hindu mythology as the "Creation" of the Gods. In her outline of the Stanzas, H.P.B. says:

> Stanza IV shows the differentiation of the "Germ" of the Universe into the septenary hierarchy of conscious Divine Powers, who are the active manifestations of the One Supreme Energy. They are the framers, shapers, and ultimately the creators of all the manifested Universe, in the only sense in which the name "Creator" is intelligible; they inform and guide it; they are the intelligent Beings who adjust and control evolution, embodying in themselves those manifestations of the ONE LAW, which we know as "The Laws of Nature." (*S.D.* I, 21-22.)

The *differentiation of the germ* is the beginning of relationships—reference points in Time and Space and the circumstances of all planes of Being, the field of Causation.

Reflection on the idea of "cause" reveals a scale of causes, interlinked in orderly fashion. The human mind, commonly concerned with appearances, seeks the *immediate* cause of a given phenomenon. The Sanskrit word *upadana* means "material cause—as flax is the cause of linen." But does flax *become* linen? Not without the *efficient* cause, the workers. And upon what do the workers depend? A pattern to follow, and the acquired intelligence become active. Beyond all, is the "unitary" cause, the *root* Cause of the "visible garb of the invisible Soul"—incomprehensible to the finite mind.

There is throughout the Theosophical philosophy the sure guide of "analogy and correspondence"—the birth of a Universe parallels the birth of a man. Until his death in any given incarnation, and after the death of the body, he participates in the great Mystery of Being. Where, but within himself, shall he seek for the key to the Mystery? This ultimate need is stated in *The Voice of the Silence* (p. 5):

> Saith the Great Law: "In order to become the KNOWER of ALL SELF, thou hast first of SELF to be the knower." To reach the knowledge of that SELF, thou hast to give up Self to Non-Self, Being to Non-Being, and then thou canst repose between the wings of the GREAT BIRD. Aye, sweet is rest between the wings of that which is not born, nor dies, but is the AUM throughout eternal ages.

This mood is captured by Robert Crosbie in his *Notes on the Bhagavad-Gita* (pp. 164-5):

> The words "Universal Divine Perfections" have a significance not usually perceived. Men speak of perfection from the standpoint of imperfection, and always in relation to forms, conditions and appearances that are constantly changing; so that with humanity in general the standard of perfection is an ever-receding and elusive, as well as delusive idea. Here again, as with our modern science, we reason from particulars to universals, instead of from universals to particulars, never perceiving that nothing less than *the cause itself* could ever know *itself*.
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> The discourses of Krishna but repeat that which was known before, to the perfected men of all ages, and that which all divine incarnations have since declared—that Man is identical with the Absolute unmanifested, and also with the Deity as we see It manifested in Nature. Our doctrines and education lead us to think that we are *inherently imperfect;* if we are so, we can never by any possibility become perfect; but if we are inherently perfect, we can see, understand and correct imperfect knowledge and use of all forces, for it is *forces* we are dealing with, not forms; it is *ideas,* not persons. We will begin to understand that there is but one force or power—the Spiritual, and that all the various effects of that one power or force that we see and experience, are due to the direction given by conscious entities of many kinds in their different degrees. To understand the "divine perfections," they must be applied universally, from the standpoint of the One Self—the Self of each, the Self of All.

An intriguing idea for drawing analogies is in the succinct statement by H.P.B.: "Three distinct representations of the Universe in its three distinct aspects are impressed upon our thought by the esoteric philosophy: the PRE-EXISTING (evolved from) the EVER-EXISTING; and the PHENOMENAL—the world of illusion, the reflection, and shadow thereof." (*S.D.* I, 278.)

The world of illusion is also the world of distractions. The pre-existing world is the world of *continuity*. The ever-existing is the Reality, beginningless and endless.

In a septenary scheme of manifestation, *continuity* must have its seven aspects, one of which is the line of "transmitters" of the Archaic Truths. Such transmission carries the highest hopes and the deepest commitment to work for "the amelioration of the condition of humanity." The Theosophical Movement began "far back in the night of Time. Wherever thought has struggled to be free, wherever spiritual ideas, as opposed to forms and dogmatism have been promulgated, there the great Movement is to be discerned. The Theosophical Movement is moral, ethical, spiritual, universal, invisible save in effect, and continuous." So wrote Wm. Q. Judge.

And Robert Crosbie applied the ideas of *causation* and *continuity* to the present time. He said: "H.P.B. was not an isolated phenomenon of the nineteenth century. Unrelated to times and eternities, her work has no meaning for us. Unless she represented a continuity of effort, unless she was the latest of a hierarchy of teachers that began with the birth of humanity, then we have slight concern with the philosophy that she taught. For that philosophy was based upon a perpetual law of self-sacrifice, existing from the dawn of time, and varying from age to age only in the manner of its application and the needs of its beneficiaries. It represented the spiritual education of the world. It implied successive revelations of spiritual truth, of Theosophy, each adapted to periodic human wants, each related to all others in plan, design, intention. It declared a sequence of spiritual teachers, a sequence governed by precise cyclic laws, and destined ultimately to unveil the totality of Theosophic Truth. It is only in the light of that cyclic law that we can understand the portentous movement that began in 1875, under the direction of H. P. Blavatsky, and all other movements, in all other times, to which it was related. Unless we can think in ages instead of by the dwarfed standards of a human life, there can be no real survey of the battlefield, nor comprehension of the great figures that have fought thereon. To understand H.P.B. is to understand what Krishna meant when he said: 'I incarnate from age to age, for the preservation of the just, the destruction of the wicked, and the establishment of righteousness'."

THE SELF-SUFFICIENT

"There is no repose for the mind except in the Absolute; for feeling, except in the Infinite; for the soul, except in the divine." Nothing finite is true, is interesting, or worthy to fix my attention. All that is particular is exclusive, and all that is exclusive repels me. There is nothing non-exclusive but the ALL; my end is communion with Being. Then, in the light of the Absolute, every idea becomes worth studying; in that of the Infinite, every existence worth respecting; in that of the divine, every creature worth loving.

Amiel's Journal

letters • questions • comment

It would, of course, be nearly impossible as well as mostly irrelevant to try to determine how many persons involved in the Theosophical Movement are essentially of religious temperament and how many are agnostic. Certain it is that Theosophy has appealed and may appeal equally to both, though the initial approaches may seem so different as to almost constitute opposites. In such a consideration, and for those of "agnostic" bent, a sort of perpetual puzzle is posed by H. P. Blavatsky's many open statements concerning her direct connection with living Mahatmas, or Masters of Wisdom—whom the Theosophical student may feel he knows about only from indirect testimony. Now the agnostic seems determined to seek truth on the basis of direct experience alone and, traditionally, is disposed to disregard any representations of sources of "special knowledge" unless these may be examined at first hand. He cannot, in short, honestly "believe" in H.P.B.'s contact with "Masters" in the same way that a Christian can believe in special communications from Jesus as a transcendent being. Yet the same agnostic may feel a profound respect for H.P.B. and be inclined to regard everything she said as likely to contain the essence of that which needs *to be known.*

An agnostic is not a man insensitive to the dimensions of deep conviction, but often, rather, one who is fully aware of his own desire and need for a gnosis, while honest enough to reject the thought of gratifying the desire prematurely or superficially. In so far as Adepts, or Masters of Wisdom, are considered to be illustrations of universal tradition—the teaching that there always have been and always will be great teachers—the agnostic can feel a full response. He may feel that he *knows* that some beings have attained high spiritual status, while at the same time doubt either his capacity or the capacity of any contemporary to say just who such beings are. But to assume that such inability is a permanent condition is to pass beyond agnosticism into denial and skepticism. The agnostic can find no quarrel with H.P.B.'s statement that "the human heart has not yet fully uttered itself, and we have never attained or even under-

stood the extent of its powers; it cannot be unreasonable to infer and believe that a faculty of perception is also growing in man, enabling him to descry facts and truths even beyond our ordinary ken." So may not the agnostic feel that an extraordinary being such as H.P.B. *could* have developed such perception as to enable *her* "to describe facts beyond ordinary ken"?

Let us now turn to one of H. P. Blavatsky's statements regarding the context in which the existence of specific Adepts may be mentioned. She writes (*Fundamentals of Theosophy,* p. 21):

> At an advanced point upon the path, Adeptship is reached by those who have devoted several incarnations to its achievement. For, remember well, no man has ever reached Adeptship in the Secret Sciences in one life; but many incarnations are necessary for it after the formation of a conscious purpose and the beginning of the needful training. Many may be the men and women in the very midst of our society who have begun this uphill work toward illumination several incarnations ago, and who yet, owing to the personal illusions of the present life, are either ignorant of the fact, or on the road to losing every chance in this existence of progressing any further. They feel an irresistible attraction toward occultism and the *Higher Life,* and yet are too personal and self-opinionated. . . .

During the two decades from 1876 to 1896, a great number of claims were made by various Theosophists respecting their supposed communications with Masters—either the specific adepts to whom H.P.B. referred as "instructors" during her writing of *Isis* or, perhaps, other and more glamorous invisible sages. Amidst the many claims and counterclaims, it has been of more than casual interest to note that only William Q. Judge's statements concerning specific Masters were in complete harmony—both as to tone and content—with Madame Blavatsky's. Judge, too, provided a context of evolutionary philosophy respecting such beings, and the major share of his attention, in writing, was given to the presentation of this philosophy, rather than to intriguing statements about a particular adept communicant. Among Judge's various introductions to the general subject of Mahatmas, one in particular is both disarming and inviting. Here he sets forth no claims, but leaves the door open for further questions and discussion:

> What appears to the Western mind to be a very strange superstition prevails in India about wonderful persons who are said to be of immense age, and who keep themselves secluded in places not accessible to the ordinary traveler. So long has this been cur-

> rent in India that the name applied to these beings is well known in the Sanskrit language: "Mahatma," a compound of two words, *maha,* great, and *atma,* soul. The belief in the existence of such persons is not confined to the ignorant, but is shared by the educated of all castes.
>
> The credence given to such a universal theory grows out of an old Indian doctrine that man is a spiritual being—a soul, in other words—and that this soul takes on different bodies from life to life on earth in order at last to arrive at such perfect knowledge, through repeated experience, as to enable one to assume a body fit to be the dwelling-place of a Mahatma or perfected soul. Then, they say, that particular soul becomes a spiritual helper to mankind. The perfected men are said to know the truth about the genesis of worlds and systems, as well as the development of man upon this and other planets. (*Echoes from the Orient.*)

Subsequent to this Mr. Judge admits a relation between the persuasion of many Theosophists in respect to the existence of Masters and religious beliefs in general:

> Were such doctrines held only in India, it would be natural to pass the subject by with this brief mention. But when it is found that a large body of people in America and Europe hold the same beliefs, it is interesting to note such an un-Western development of thought. The Theosophical Society was founded in New York in 1875, with the avowed object of forming a nucleus for a Universal Brotherhood. Within its ranks there flourish beliefs in the Mahatmas of India and in Reincarnation and its twin doctrine, Karma. (*Ibid.*)

Later, Mr. Judge speaks of such teachings as those pertaining to Mahatmas, reincarnation, and karma as "grand theories," thus affording the man of agnostic temperament a feeling of hospitality to his position. But on this difficult topic, what is it precisely that both the religiously-inclined "believer" and the scientifically-inclined agnostic have in common? In either case, if a man is profoundly influenced by the impact of H. P. Blavatsky's writings in general, he will follow H.P.B. into areas beyond his present ken with considerable confidence in her worthiness as a guide. If he wishes to "believe" in the real existence of those to whom H.P.B. referred as her own adept teachers, he will do so; that is he will think, feel, and evaluate *as if* he knew of his own knowledge of this relationship between H. P. Blavatsky and her teachers. His attitude toward the relationship will be one of faith, based upon devotion to an ideal.

The agnostic, on the other hand, can only fully explore this "grand theory" when he thinks, feels, and evaluates *as if* it were known to

him to be true. The difference between the two may lie simply in the fact that the agnostic's belief is provisional—provisional, not in the sense of skepticism, but as an accomplishment of *realizing that he does not yet realize* that which may be known to H.P.B.

There come times in the lives of all human beings, including the youngest and the oldest, when one needs to proceed *as if* something not yet fully known is known with a surety and clarity which is only to come later. To the extent that any religious system has aimed at bettering human behavior, the mandates of morality have been based upon this assumption. But the Theosophist apparently has an additional task: he is called upon to be aware of the discrepancy between his belief and his actual knowledge. Yet he is also invited to swallow the natural pride of self-assertiveness whenever he finds one he considers a true teacher. It is not easy, in our cycle, to believe and behave "as if" many things known to the teacher are also truths for ourselves. But without the ability to place trust in this fashion, a man is usually incapable of reaching a state of mind which makes it possible for the teacher to teach all that can be taught, or for himself to learn all that may be learned.

IMAGE WITHOUT SUBSTANCE

The vast majority of all Americans believe in God; yet from all observations, scientifically organized as well as random observations, it seems clear that this belief in God has very little consequence for action and the conduct of life. Most people are concerned with health, money, and "education" (the latter as part of social success), and not at all with the problems which would arise if they were concerned with God. . . . If there is anything to be taken seriously in our profession of God, it is to recognize the fact that God has become an idol. Not an idol of wood or stone like the ones our ancestors worshipped, but an idol of words, phrases, doctrines.

—ERICH FROMM

THE FOUNDER OF MESMERISM

TODAY Anton Mesmer, once outcast of science, is at least a reputable "doctor of medicine," although sometimes regarded as one whose other ideas cannot be brought to proof. Yet the kind of mesmerism he warned against is daily and hourly being put into practice! But whatever the world has been led to think at various times, Mesmer's real work need not be considered accidental. He was selected, said H. P. Blavatsky, on orders of the "Great Brotherhood" to act as pioneer in the last quarter of the eighteenth century, to enlighten a small portion of the West in occult lore. He founded at that time the Order of Universal Harmony, in which "presumably only animal magnetism was taught, but in reality many of the ancient occult sciences." The activity centered chiefly in Paris, with Cagliostro commissioned to help, and the Count de St. Germain supervising developments.

During the preceding 1600's the separate inductive sciences were brought into birth through Copernicus, Kepler, Galileo, and down to Newton; with them came one remnant of a heritage out of the kabalistic past which threatened to become a non-entity, and is so denominated at this hour—*ether,* or the etheric medium for the transmission of "forces" through space. The heritage left by Einstein three hundred years after Newton, gravitation and electromagnetism, awaits further comprehension. Is this *the* Ether of occult science which Einstein dethroned: "finer than any gas but nevertheless more elastic than the hardest steel," or one more travesty invented by the mechanists through the centuries?

> There is a law in nature that operates in every department *whether moral or physical,* and which may now be called that of undulation and then that of inhibition; while at other times it reappears as vibration, and still again as attraction and repulsion, but all these changes are only apparent because at bottom it is the same. (*Notes on The Bhagavad-Gita,* p. 31).

By a close reading of the above the student may find many of the irreconcilables of physics falling into proper perspective. In Theosophy, law is principle and vice versa; Æther or Akasha—underlying substratum of force—is something quite different from the

material ether hypothesized as medium of transmission and now outlawed. Mesmer rediscovered to the world of the eighteenth century that "Ether" which is the synthesizing element of atomic physics, and taught it plainly for everyone's inspection and investigation as animal magnetism. He tried with a single structural principle to synthesize nature and man, thereby to restore to the newly-created mathematical sciences their missing soul—the occult sciences.

Mesmer called this the universal Fluid—all-pervading, subtler than any fluids hitherto known, capable of penetrating all organic and inorganic matter, of animating and exhilarating all life. Though one may only surmise what secrets were opened up within his Order, or School, his "Maxims" range in their speculations from the usual statement of Principles down to theory of processes. They discuss Cohesion, Elasticity, Gravity, Fire, Flux and Reflux, Electricity, Man, Sensations, Instinct, Sickness, Education, Nervous Diseases, plus a summary on the magnetic treatment by mesmerism, per se. Quite likely the higher esoteric aspects of these teachings were never written down.

Besides suggesting how the action of the Fluid enters into all communications and all interactions and propagations of whatever nature, between earth, sun, planets, and men, Mesmer demonstrated—as indicated—before everyone the visible existence of the magnetic essence in his animal magnetism. Says H. P. Blavatsky: "Animal magnetism, the creative and life-giving force, was the principal agent anciently used by the initiated priests in old Temples of Healing where diseases were cured by magnetic processes." Paracelsus speaks of it; Roger Bacon and a host of other practitioners (of magic), from the Greek Aesculapius on, all teach the presence of a concealed mysterious power, whence come the wondrous faculties of *true* Magic. For what is "magic"? It is but spiritual wisdom, and the "magician" is but the possessor of spiritual knowledge and wisdom. At all periods the thaumaturgists and miracle-workers controlled the currents and waves of the Astral Light by guiding them with their will-power, such wonders being of both physical and psychological character. The feats performed by the maligned Cagliostro were in perfect accord with natural law, his wonders quite genuine—hence they were no "miracles," but due to the exercise of supernormal powers.

Much that was kept secret by Mesmer and his school, Theosophy now brings out into the open through the medium of public print.

YOUTH FORUM

One sometimes wonders what would happen if people spoke what they really felt. We deceive each other, almost automatically, every day. Is there some way to free ourselves from this subtle web of dishonesty, or is it an inevitable condition of civilization, and must one always, in the words of Eliot, "prepare a face to meet the faces that you meet"?

In almost any purely social gathering, the words one speaks are expected to be convivial rather than strictly truthful. In such situations, a person who asks, "How have you been?" does not usually intend the sentence as a real question, but rather as part of a fixed social ritual. "Ritual" may seem a strong word to use when speaking of a mere convention, but let anyone (especially in a formal situation) try to break that convention! Let us say, for instance, that one answers his interlocutor's question honestly, and begins talking about his own troubles; he will be made to realize soon enough that he has committed a real "heresy" against what one might call "the cult of conviviality." The punishment for habitual infraction almost certainly is ostracism.

On the other hand, honesty by itself would seem to be a rather blank virtue, at times almost a vice. A person who allows every thought that enters his head to come out his mouth is not likely to learn anything of restraint, nor to have many friends, either. After all, do not our deepest insights generally come to us only after a long period of questioning and introspection? Besides, there are many subtle truths, shades of feeling, vague intuitions, which can only be blunted and misrepresented when put into words. If the Mona Lisa came to life, who would be so obtuse as to ask her to explain what she was smiling at?

So far, the discussion has centered around two "types": the socially entertaining, to whom everything (in public) is "just fine"; and the placidly honest, forever "spilling" his and other people's "beans." And yet such a classification is much too neat to be really

accurate; people are far too complex to conform to any psychological formula. Perhaps, then, we should not consider the above "types" as representing particular people, but rather as representing certain tendencies which exist in almost all of us in our contacts with other people.

There are, of course, many reasons for these tendencies towards superficiality, not the least of which is laziness. When asked a superficial question, the most natural thing to do is to give a superficial answer. It's the easy way out, the expected response. A deeper and more complex reason is fear. With an instinct not very different from that of self-preservation, we guard our words, afraid to wear our heart on our sleeve lest we get hurt. Nor is it an idle fear; too often it is based on hard experience. Yet there are more altruistic reasons as well. One might speak on only one aspect of a "truth" out of consideration for the feelings of others. Not all truths are beautiful to look at.

All these considerations are obvious, but in spite of the pressures against a strict honesty, there is something within us that resists whenever we "prepare a face." In physical existence, the soul is imprisoned in a cage of flesh, a web of thoughts, a net of desires; and it longs for freedom to express itself. It would seem, then, that to the soul, all the idle chatter composing our anecdotal lives must sound like the noise of a lot of loosely linked chains clanking together. Quite different is the natural song of the soul.

Mr. Judge distinguishes between dead words and living words, declaring that "when we step away from . . . conventionality, words become alive in proportion to the reality and purity of the thought that is behind them." If there are two kinds of words, there would seem to be two kinds of honesty, conventional honesty and a living, spiritual honesty. The first kind, if followed to the letter, would result in one of the "types" discussed above. But the second sort of honesty is the refreshing creative approach to any situation, however trivial it appears. Fearlessness and imagination are certainly called for; but most important is the attitude which sees in even superficial conversation an opportunity to inject meaning, to raise, inspire, transform. Even the most gregarious people will eventually find an unalleviated "pleasantness" wearing, and will often welcome real sincerity as they would a breath of fresh air.

MESSENGER OF DIVINE THOUGHT

What is the prime idea to be held in the study of Evolution?

The one prevailing, most distinct idea—found in all ancient teachings with reference to Cosmic Evolution—is that the whole Kosmos has sprung from Divine Thought. This thought impregnates matter, which is co-eternal with the One Reality; and all that lives and breathes evolves from the emanations of the eternal One Root.

"Sprung from Divine Thought." But is any idea of "Divine Thought" itself assimilable to human intellectual capacity?

Divine Thought cannot be defined, or its meaning explained, except by the numberless manifestations of Cosmic Substance in which the former is sensed spiritually by those who can do so. The Divine Thought does not imply a Divine thinker.

Stated in other terms, the divine principle is eternal (Universal Mind). The gods (Dhyan Chohans) are periodical. Fohat is the synthesis of the "Seven" and the Intelligence of the seven creative Builders.

Whence the Vehicle wherein all this evolving takes place?

Cosmic Ideation is Mahat or Intelligence, the Universal World-Soul. It is the basis of the intelligent operations in and of Nature. Cosmic Ideation is said to be non-existent during pralayic periods, for the simple reason that there is no one, and nothing, to perceive its effects. During these periods the variously differentiated states of Cosmic Substance are resolved back again into the primary states of abstract potential objectivity.

Pre-cosmic substance is the primordial substance not yet passed out of latency into differentiated objectivity. When the hour strikes and it becomes receptive of the Fohatic impress of the Divine Thought—its heart is said to open. Primordial matter, before it emerges from the plane of the never-manifesting, and awakens to the thrill of action under the impulse of Fohat, is but a "cool Radiance, colourless, formless, tasteless, and devoid of every quality and aspect."

NOTE.—Collated from standard Theosophical sources.

The "Pre-cosmic," then, in some manner gives birth to the "Cosmic"?

As soon as Darkness—or rather that which is "darkness" for ignorance—has disappeared in its own realm of eternal Light, leaving behind only its divine manifested Ideation, the creative Logoi (Builders) have their understanding opened, and they see in the Ideal World (hitherto concealed in the Divine Thought) the archetypal forms of all, and proceed to copy and build or fashion upon these models, forms evanescent and transcendent.

The plan of our Universe, its worlds and men—the cosmic blueprint, so to say, was first in the Ideal World and later worked out by the "Builders"?

The Plan was furnished by the Ideation of the Universe, and the constructive labor was left to the Hosts of intelligent Powers and Forces. These are the aggregate of the Dhyan Chohans and the other forces which are dual in their character, being composed of the irrational brute energy inherent in matter, and the intelligent soul of Cosmic consciousness which directs and guides that energy, and which is the Dhyan-Chohanic thought reflecting the Ideation of the Universal Mind.

In strict accuracy—to avoid confusion and misconceptions, the term "Matter" ought to be applied to the aggregate of objects of possible perception, and "Substance" to noumena. For inasmuch as the phenomena of *our* plane are the creation of the perceiving Ego—the modifications of its own subjectivity—all the "states of matter representing the aggregate of perceived objects" can have but a relative and purely phenomenal existence for the children of our plane.

Manvantaric impulse commences with the re-awakening of Cosmic Ideation (the Universal Mind) concurrently with, and parallel to the primary emergence of Cosmic Substance—the latter being the manvantaric vehicle of the former—from its undifferentiated *pralayic* state. Then, Absolute Wisdom mirrors itself in its Ideation; which, by a transcendental process, superior to and incomprehensible by human consciousness, results in Cosmic Energy (Fohat).

Just what is Fohat in the world of spirit and matter?

It is the link. Just as Manas is the connecting link between the gross matter of the physical body and the divine Monad which animates it, but is powerless to act upon the former directly. In its

totality, viewed from the standpoint of manifested Divine Thought, Universal Mind represents the Hosts of the higher creative Dhyan Chohans. Mahat (Universal Mind) is the entire collectivity of those Dhyan Chohans of *sentient life* of which Fohat is the representative on the objective plane—and the Manasaputras on the subjective.

Frankly, these ideas seem frightfully difficult!

The author of *The Secret Doctrine* left many significant hints, among them being this: "Since this work withholds far more than it gives out, the student is invited to use his own intuitions."

May we go on. Is "Fohat" recognized by science today?

When an Occultist speaks of Fohat—the energizing and guiding intelligence in the universal electrical or Vital fluid—he is laughed at. Let us recapitulate a few of the statements made of him.

Fohat is one thing in the yet unmanifested Universe and another in the phenomenal and occult world. In the latter he is that occult, vital power which, under the will of the Creative Logos, unites and brings together all forms, giving them the first impulse which becomes in time law. Fohat is the emanation of those other Powers behind him; the dynamic energy of Cosmic Ideation. He is one of the most, if not the most important character in esoteric Cosmogony. Fohat is the agent of the Law, its representative.

What is Fohat's relation to the "Builders" who "have their understanding opened" at the beginning of Manvantara?

The Builders are classes of the invisible but intelligent masons, who fashion matter according to the Ideal Plan ready for them in that which is called Divine or Cosmic Ideation. Fohat is called the "Builder of the Builders," the Force that he personifies having formed our planetary chain. Fohat is not only the living symbol and container of that Force, but is looked upon by the Occultists as an Entity—the forces he acts upon being cosmic, human, and terrestrial, and exercising their influences on all those planes respectively. He is, metaphysically, the objectivized thought of the gods; the "Word made Flesh," on a lower scale, and the messenger of Cosmic and human ideations; the active force of Universal Life.

How is he the messenger of the "Powers" from which he emanates?

"Fohat runs the Manus (Dhyan Chohans) errands." He causes the ideal prototypes to expand from within without, viz., to cross gradually, on a descending scale, on all the planes from the noumenon to the lowest phenomenon, to bloom finally on the last into full

objectivity—the acme of illusion, or the grossest matter.

This is a sevenfold Universe. Has Fohat to do with all space?

Akasha is in fact that Universal Space in which lies inherent the eternal Ideation of the Universe in its ever-changing aspects on the planes of matter and objectivity. Fohat, running along the seven principles of Akasha, acts upon manifested substance or the One Element, and by differentiating it into various centres of energy, sets in motion the Law of Cosmic Evolution, which, in obedience to the Ideation of the Universal Mind, brings into existence all the various states of being in the manifested solar system.

Can more be said of these "various centres of energy"?

The seven centres of energy are evolved, or rendered objective by the action of Fohat upon the one element; or, in fact, the seventh Principle of the seven elements which exist throughout the manifested Kosmos. When Fohat is said to produce "seven laya centres," it means that for formative or creative purposes, the Great Law stops, or rather modifies its perpetual motion on seven invisible points within the area of the manifested universe.

It is through Fohat that the ideas of the Universal Mind are impressed upon matter. Fohat is the "bridge" by which the "Ideas" existing in the "Divine Thought" are impressed on Cosmic Substance as the "laws of Nature."

Would it not appear that Fohat has the powers of a "God"?

Fohat is no personal God but the emanation of those other Powers behind him, the "Messenger of the Primordial Sons of Life and Light." When science speaks of evolution through brute matter, blind force, and senseless motion, the Occultists point to *intelligent* Law and *sentient* Life, and add that Fohat is the guiding Spirit of all this. The latter, the desire of sentient life shows itself in everything, from an atom to a sun. It is a reflection of the Divine Thought propelled into objective existence, into a law that the Universe should exist.

Fohat is the constructive force of Cosmic Electricity. On the Cosmic plane his influence is present in the constructive power that carries out in the formation of things—from the planetary system down to the glow-worm and the simple daisy—the Plan in the Mind of Nature, or in the Divine Thought, with regard to the development of that special thing. On the earthly plane his influence is felt in the strong desire of the magnetizer. In the manifested Universe Fohat is the ever-present electrical energy, the ceaseless destructive and

formative power. Fohat, in its various manifestations, is the mysterious link between Mind and Matter, the animating principle electrifying every atom into life.

Is Fohat Electricity per se?

Fohat is the "spirit" of Electricity, which is Life of the Universe. Life and electricity are one in our philosophy. Fohat is the essence of electricity. Withal, neither the nature of electricity nor of life nor even of light, are to this day understood. To understand something of the nature of Cosmic Electricity, other properties must be added to those commonly known, including Intelligence. Electricity is not only a substance but is an emanation from an Entity, which is neither god nor devil but one of the numberless Entities that rule and guide our world according to the eternal Law of Karma.

Is our electricity, the kind we know of, an "Entity"?

Electricity can be called an "entity" only when we refer to it as Fohat, its primordial Force. The electricity we handle is but the result of ordinary matter affected by something invisible, the "ultimate generating power" of every force, the "one omnipresent influence."

What is meant when "sons and brothers of Fohat" are referred to in The Secret Doctrine?

The "sons of Fohat" are the various forces having fohatic, or cosmic electric life in their essence and being, and in their various effects. They represent and personify the seven forms of cosmic Magnetism, the active and co-operative progeny of whom are electricity, magnetism, sound, light, heat, etc. On the cosmic plane Fohat is behind all such manifestations as light, heat, sound, adhesion, etc., etc. Occult science defines these as supersensuous effects in their *hidden behavior,* and as objective phenomena in the world of senses. Thus, of the latter it is said that "unconscious Nature" is in reality an aggregate of forces manipulated by semi-intelligent beings (Elementals), guided by High Planetary Spirits (Dhyan Chohans), whose collective aggregate forms the manifested *verbum* of the unmanifested Logos, and constitutes at one and the same time the Mind of the Universe, and its immutable Law.

Had all the nations of antiquity their Fohat too?

Fohat is the key in Occultism which opens and unriddles the multiform symbols and respective allegories in the so-called mythology of every nation.

THE PEACE THAT SURPASSETH

WHAT is Theosophy? Many will say that Theosophy is first of all a way of life. Some will say it is the philosophy of the rational explanation of things; others that it is an assertion of laws, principles, universal plan and pattern. But all this will need elaboration, as these conceptual descriptions are nothing new to an enquiring mind. Many are the organized bodies in function today which make similar claims. How can Theosophy be clearly distinguished yet freed in the inquirer's mind from any sectarianism? This is not a simple task—not possible unless one hits upon the miracle that the searcher is in need of, and strikes full into a waiting niche of consciousness.

Many persons are satisfied with a direct statement of Fundamentals, yet the necessary mental adjustment to such assertions may not be immediate. The inquirer will ask, "Who has made this ultimate discovery?" a query to which there is no ready reply. However, the assertion can be made and logically maintained that a principle is a principle, a law is a law—existing prior to scientific formulation—or its discovery could never have been made. If it has not so existed throughout eternity, it is not "true," it is not *principle*. It will continue to exist even if lost sight of, for the reason that it is of universal sway, and, because of this too, all our "concepts" will never alter it in one particular. Being eternal, being universal, a principle is independent of and surpasses the most enlightened of "concepts."

We may deny or affirm, but how can we affect galaxies and universes by denials, affirmations, speculations? In those unknown worlds are the same universal space, universal law, universal principle. To the genuinely contemplative mind, there is THAT which is beyond all change, beyond all need of mayavic relationships, undivided, eternal, the one essential, the causeless SAT. This sort of "thinking" is not born of the emotions, this sort of comfort is not to be found exteriorly. "There is no reality for man save in his Atman." All lesser "reals" are in fact different kinds of narcotics.

One's saddest perception is that brother souls will soon retreat again to their crystallized hibernation called earth consciousness after short glimpses of the noëtic. If only, one feels, certain ideas would strike fire and vibrate for a moment to an eternal idea, in a brief instant might be counted æons of progress for that Ego.

on the lookout

New Concept of Matter

Extrasensory perception is a field of scientific inquiry which is necessarily concerned with the study of characteristics of matter, particularly as these relate to possible explanations of phenomena observed. Noting changing views on this subject, Susy Smith (*ESP*, Pyramid Books, New York) states:

> Many of our current scientific thinkers of great stature have expressed themselves publicly about the pure enigmas arising from the splitting of the atom and the dissolution of matter, and about the necessity for us to revamp and reshape our thinking to meet these new concepts. Among these men are Erwin Schroedinger, Max Planck, Niels Bohr, Henry Margenau, Edmund Sinnott, and Albert Einstein himself.

Views of Occultism

In this connection, in *The Secret Doctrine* I, 514, H. P. Blavatsky writes:

> Matter, to the Occultist, it must be remembered, is that totality of *existences* in the Kosmos, which falls within any of the planes of possible perception. . . . If they [men of Science] would fathom the ultimate nature of these Forces [sound, heat and light] they have first to admit their substantial nature, however *supersensuous*. . . . The Occultists are taken to task for calling the *Cause* of light, heat, sound, cohesion, magnetism, etc., etc., a *substance*. The "substance" of the Occultist, however, is to the most refined *substance* of the physicist, what *radiant matter* is to the leather of the Chemist's boots.

Atom Explored

While this area of research is primarily the domain of the physicist, or, one might say the physicist-philosopher, speculation has also been aroused among other men of science. Susy Smith quotes Donald Hatch Andrews of the Department of Chemistry, Johns Hopkins University, who declares that:

> If the atom is really mostly empty space filled with a little electricity, and only a tiny speck of matter at its center [and matter itself is actually only waves or vibrations], we have to revise our ideas about what is real. It is clear that we can no longer take our senses as our guides.

> When my finger touches a piece of wood it is not *matter* touching *matter;* it is an *electrical wave* touching another *electrical wave*. When I look at you, I am not seeing matter; I am seeing a harmonic complex of electrical vibration. And what is more important, I am seeing far less than one per cent of all the vibration which you are producing. For your presence is manifested far more in the invisible world than in the visible. And to understand your *total* reality we must examine this world of invisible vibrations and invisible forces.

That Dr. Andrews' statement, which is the generally held scientific view today, is in reality a restatement of older views is emphasized by the following reference in *The Secret Doctrine* I, 507 fn.:

> Occultism says that in all cases when matter *appears* inert, it is the most active. A wooden or a stone block is motionless and impenetrable to all intents and purposes. Nevertheless, and *de facto,* its particles are in ceaseless eternal vibration which is so rapid that to the physical eye the body seems absolutely devoid of motion.

Perception and Perceiver

One of the scientists mentioned by Susy Smith in *ESP,* Erwin Schroedinger, has been quoted previously in THEOSOPHY (19: 321, 322, 454; 35: 113). His interest in "The Mystery of Sensual Qualities" (in *Mind and Matter,* p. 88) is revealed in this statement:

> On the one hand all our knowledge about the world around us, both that gained in everyday life and that revealed by the most carefully planned and painstaking laboratory experiments, rests entirely on immediate sense perception, while on the other hand this knowledge fails to reveal the relations of the sense perceptions to the outside world, so that in the picture or model we form of the outside world, guided by our scientific discoveries, all sensual qualities are absent. . . . The non-scientist has, as a rule, a great reverence for science and credits us scientists with being able, by our "fabulously refined methods," to make out what, by its very nature, no human can possibly make out and never will be able to make out.

Schroedinger then discusses the distinction between the sensations of color, taste, etc., and the processes which have resulted in those sensations. He reaches the conclusion that:

> (*a*) All scientific knowledge is based on sense perception, and
>
> (*b*) None the less the scientific views of natural processes formed in this way lack all sensual qualities and therefore cannot account for the latter.

Element of Mind

> No natural happening is in itself either good or bad, nor is it in itself either beautiful or ugly. The values are missing. Nature does not act by purposes. . . . The show that is going on obviously acquires a meaning only with regard to the mind that contemplates it. But what science tells us about this relationship is patently absurd: as if mind had only been produced by that very display that it is now watching and would pass away with it when the sun finally cools down and the earth has been turned into a desert of ice and snow.

Science and Occult Science

A determination of the total reality sought by Dr. Andrews as well as a concept of meaning suggested by Dr. Schroedinger may be discovered by the student by contrasting Science with Occult Science as found in the words of H.P.B.

> The duty of the Occultist lies with the *Soul and Spirit* of Cosmic Space, not merely with its illusive appearance and behaviour. That of official physical science is to analyze and study its *shell* —the *Ultima Thule* of the Universe and man, in the opinion of Materialism (*S.D.* I, 589) . . . The waves and undulations of Science are all produced by atoms propelling their molecules into activity *from within.* Atoms fill the immensity of Space, and by their continuous vibration *are* that MOTION which keeps the wheels of Life perpetually going. It is that inner work that produces the natural phenomena called the correlation of Forces. Only, at the origin of every such "force," there stands the *conscious* guiding noumenon thereof—Angel or God, Spirit or Demon—ruling powers, yet the same. (*S.D.* I, 633.)
>
> The idea of Eternal Non-Being, which is the One Being, will appear a paradox to anyone who does not remember that we limit our ideas of being to our present consciousness of existence. . . . The One Being is the noumenon of all the noumena which we know must underlie phenomena, and give them whatever shadow of reality they possess, but which we have not the senses or the intellect to cognize at present. . . . The common mortal can form no conception of the reality of things separated from the Maya which veils them, and in which they are hidden. (*S.D.* I. 45.)

Buddhism towards Philosophy

As already pointed out in THEOSOPHY (October, 1962), the work of the quarterly *Buddhist World Philosophy* has points in common with Theosophical objectives: it shuns "organizational proselytizing" and aims to avoid sectarianism. The lead article in the April-June issue deals with the Wesak celebration at the time of the first Full Moon in May. This event has a threefold significance: it com-

memorates the birthday of Gautama Buddha, the day he retired to the jungle on his quest, and the day he passed out of this world.

The True Meaning of Buddhism

The task of restoring the true meaning of Buddhism, begun by Henry S. Olcott in the latter part of last century, is resumed by *BWP*:

> The Buddhist will lose sight of the true meaning of Buddhism if he becomes too engrossed in the physical observation of the Wesak celebration alone. As the Wesak celebrants recall the Birth, Enlightenment and Death of Gautama at this time, let them not forget that the birth of Gautama would have been meaningless if he had not attained Buddhahood, and that the Buddha-nature was thus revealed as an eternal fact and attainable by all creatures.

This calls to mind a similar teaching in *The Voice of the Silence*: "Yet, O thou anxious one, no warrior volunteering fight in the fierce strife between the living and the dead, not one recruit can ever be refused the right to enter on the Path that leads toward the field of Battle." Continuing with the article:

> Gautama declared, "He who seeth me seeth the *Dhamma;* he who seeth the *Dhamma,* seeth me." The modern Buddhist must therefore be more concerned with his own experience and use of the *Dhamma* than with attention paid in ecclesiastical observance of holidays, veneration of sacred relics, and so on. Gautama's whole life and teachings were against religious form and ritual and his dying command was to "work out your own salvation, with diligence."

Self-induced and Self-devised Efforts

The importance of this phase of evolution, when man proceeds along the path of enlightenment by "self-induced and self-devised efforts," is pointed out:

> The modern Buddhist must remember that Gautama Buddha was not born a Buddha; by his own persistent effort and struggle he made himself to be a Buddha. Likewise, every present-day follower of the Buddha not yet expressing the Buddha-nature, must strive for that Enlightenment taught by Gautama Buddha. One can think of Gautama leaving his father's palace to seek Enlightenment. He must have been lonely at first, confused by the stupidity and inertia of those he met.

Symbolism of the Bo-Tree

It is one thing to aspire; another, to attain. Knowledge, wisdom and sacrifice are the requirements that must be fulfilled. Every Great Teacher has exemplified this threefold path in his own life, and, hav-

ing reached the goal and refused its rewards, remained with the "Great Orphan Humanity" to teach those who in their turn desire to serve. How this was accomplished by Buddha is told as follows:

> Gautama Buddha attained to this Enlightenment under the Bo-tree, symbolizing the power of human nature to burst every bond of ignorance and apathy. The vitality of a Bo-tree is tremendous; its roots will rend and topple buildings. The symbol of Enlightenment under the Bo-tree is that man cannot live within himself, in meditation alone—he must tear and burst his own crystallized entity with the invincible energy of a noble purpose.

Religion—and Atheism

In February *Redbook,* Margaret Mead deals with the question, "Won't keeping all mention of religion out of the schools breed atheists?" She answers:

> No. Atheism is an active disbelief that can only be taught actively. Our public-school education was designed to stay free of religious controversy. In effect, this means keeping public education separate from religion.

Later, however, Miss Mead confines "religion" to the subject of prayer in the schools. This is understandable in view of the present controversy arising out of the Supreme Court Decision of June 25, 1962, which ruled that an official prayer in the New York public schools violated the constitution of the United States. Miss Mead suggests a daily period of silent prayer, each child praying as his parents had taught him to do. "If he had no such teaching, he could ask for suggestions," Miss Mead proposes.

Envisioned Results

But since many parents seldom, if ever, attend any church, a practical question arises. Is it Miss Mead's idea that the teacher might make the suggestions hoped for from the pupils? Here lies a potential danger. If the teacher is earnest in her own religious convictions, it would be natural for her to slant suggestions in the direction of her own religious beliefs.

This same question may arise in a different context, as is illustrated in the *Christian Science Monitor* (Dec. 17, 1962):

> The right of a junior high school principal to decide whether a textbook violates state laws against religious instruction in the public schools was upheld recently by the Worcester School Committee . . . The decisions were the result of a furor that developed when Henry M. Foxhall, principal of Forest Grove Junior High School, ordered the chapter on the history of Chris-

tianity, and some other portions, cut out of a 9th-grade supplementary history book.

Can Ethics be Taught through Religion?

In answer to Mr. Foxhall's statement, "We don't consider teaching about religion any of our business," the Worcester County Chapter of the Massachusetts Civil Liberties Union said: "Teaching about religion, rather than teaching religion, would not only be constitutionally acceptable, but quite desirable, inasmuch as religion is an important phenomenon in the history of man and therefore deserves study and understanding."

Since the word "ethics" stems from the Greek *ethos,* meaning moral character, whatever of practical value is acquired from religion, *any* religion, must be measured by the bases for ethics it inculcates. Originally, according to the teachings of Theosophy, the "Wisdom-Religion," from which all others stem, was *one* in antiquity. When asked, "Have you any ethical system that you carry out in the [Theosophical] Society?" H. P. Blavatsky answered (*Key,* p. 48):

> The ethics are there, ready and clear enough for whomsoever would follow them. They are the essence and cream of the world's ethics, gathered from the teachings of all the world's great reformers. Therefore, you will find represented therein Confucius and Zoroaster, Laotze and the Bhagavat-Gita, the precepts of Gautama Buddha and Jesus of Nazareth, of Hillel and his school, as of Pythagoras, Socrates, Plato, and their schools.

With such a broad background for the teaching of ethics, it is clear that no religion need be excluded in "teaching." These ideas could be translated into simple terms, as witness the work done in Theosophy School of ULT where the ABC's of ethics are taught, beginning with four-year-olds. No child need be left out, no parent offended.

Ban on Religious Rites—Aftermath (Cont'd)

In consonance with the Supreme Court Ruling that "an official prayer in the New York public schools violated the Constitution of the United States," the California Federation of Teachers adopted the following resolution (reported in the Los Angeles *Times,* Dec. 31, 1962):

1. Recitation of prayers in public schools be eliminated.
2. School assembly programs, musical and Christian programs, be planned emphasizing cultural themes and putting reli-

gion in a social and cultural context and not for purpose of indoctrination for a particular sectarian belief.

On the same subject, Harold R. Hogstrom of Syracuse University has drawn an imaginative picture of what might happen as the result of the Regent's Prayer decision, noted above. His article " 'Holy 24'," appears in the *Register-Leader* for December, 1962. The story opens with a description of public reaction to the Supreme Court decision and the opportunity afforded the law-makers to pass a Twenty-fourth Amendment to the Constitution which would permit prayer in the public schools.

A Fanciful Prophecy

This is what Mr. Hogstrom predicts:

> Within a year the Twenty-fourth Amendment permitting nonsectarian religious observances by public institutions had been passed by Congress, and the state legislatures vied with one another to fix their approval to it in the shortest possible time. In a matter of months it had become constitutional for public schools to have recitation of prayers in the classroom. The avalanche of support the amendment had garnered was hailed as a thundering answer to godless communism. A New York *Times* survey six months after it had become law revealed that 97 per cent of the school districts across the nation were holding prayers.
>
> Supporters of the Twenty-fourth Amendment hardly paused to savor the sweetness of victory before pressing on to new successes. Since the principle had been established that exposing children to the salubrious effects of religion in the public schools was constitutional, the next step seemed entirely logical. States like Alabama, South Carolina, and Nebraska passed laws making it mandatory of all persons to attend the church or synagogue of their choice at least four times a year. Critics were assured that none of the laws required citizens to participate actively in the religious services or even to contribute to the collections.

The climax of this fanciful tale comes "when the orthodox groups joined together with their former opponents, those who had fought against passage of the Twenty-fourth Amendment, in a crusade to repeal 'Holy 24.' " The light vein of the foregoing should not hide its serious intent—intolerance is ever ready to take advantage of any opening, however "innocent" it may be made to appear in the eyes of the public.

"Religious Freedom"

In connection with the current discussion on the Supreme Court ruling, it might be well to note what Justice William O. Douglas says

on religious freedom in *The Right of the People*: "The provision of the First Amendment that 'Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof' was a marked break with tradition. . . . Men like Madison and Jefferson worked for the disestablishment, for separation of church and state, and for liberty of conscience. The reasons for their success were several and varied. But certain it is that out of the welter of doctrinal disputes and religious persecutions and discriminations there quietly and quickly emerged a declaration of faith in religious tolerance and in the separation of church and state. It was a revolution achieved without bitter or bloody conflicts. The result was a regime of religious tolerance seldom witnessed on the earth."

Justice Douglas enumerates the "many facets" of religious freedom which the First Amendment protects:

1. No sectarian authority shares in the power of government nor sits in its councils.
2. Government has no directive influence in any of the affairs of any church.
3. Citizens are not taxed for the support of any religious institution and no church has any claim on any of the public revenues.
4. People can belong to any church they desire—or to none at all; and no one is bound to have a ceremony such as marriage performed by any sectarian authority.
5. In disputes between sects or factions of a church over the management of church affairs the civil courts apply not the law applicable to secular affairs but the law that the governing bodies of the church have provided to govern their internal affairs.

Implications for Education

6. Public schools are not proper agencies for religious education, though there is no constitutional reason why the state cannot adjust the schedules of the public schools to allow time for the students to get religious instruction elsewhere.
7. Parents and children have the privilege of patronizing private religious schools, rather than public ones, if they so desire.
8. An exercise or ritual may not be exacted by the state from an individual, if it runs counter to his religious convictions.
9. Religious liberty includes not only the conventional methods of worship but the unorthodox as well, such as distributing religious literature from door to door.
10. No license may be exacted by the state for the performance of any religious exercise nor a tax imposed on it.
11. Although the matter has not been authoritatively de-

cided, it would seem that religious liberty extends to atheists as well as to theists, to those who find their religion in ethics and morality, rather than in a Supreme Being.

12. What may be pagan exercises to one person may be a devotional to another. In general it is no business of the government what rite or practice a person selects as a part of his religious belief; and he may not be punished for practicing or avowing it.

Deadly Germs from Planets

The effectiveness of bomb shelters has been argued pro and con, but what protection can be afforded against deadly germs whose nature we cannot even guess? An article in the Los Angeles *Times* of Jan. 18 tells us that "microscopic life clinging to any space vehicle returning from the planets conceivably could destroy life on earth in a few decades." Dr. Solomon Golomb is quoted:

> There's been a great deal of thought given to preventing contamination of the moon and planets during visits by earth space vehicles, but an even greater problem entirely overlooked is what about microscopic organisms carried to the earth on return flights.

Dr. Golomb further states that "alien life forms from planets with a basic chemistry different from that which exists here could wipe out single cell organisms and eventually all life in the atmosphere, in the soil and in the oceans." In conclusion, the doctor cautions that "the basic chemistry on planets where everything is more hostile is bound to be more efficient than on earth."

The danger outlined here, although only sensed by Dr. Golomb, is, in fact, a very real one in the light of Theosophical teaching. In sober truth, such forms are "alien." The moon, for instance, man's former abode, belongs to a prior period of evolution. To hybridize any form of life existing on it would surely constitute an interference with nature's laws. Our work is still, we might say, where we find ourselves, here and now—at least until performed.

Karma—Incipient

An article in the *Psychic Observer* for November, 1962, deals with Karma from a point of view seldom, if ever, considered by Theosophists—the phenomenalistic. This is, incipient karma as seen by a "psychic." It is interesting to note, however, that in answering questions asked from this point of view, Dr. Leo Martello, the writer of the column, presents some of the more philosophic as-

pects of Karma. For example, the questions, "If a psychic reading is genuine can what is foreseen be offset by the will of a person? Are psychic impressions relative or absolute?," were answered in part as follows:

> Everything in life is relative, including psychic communications . . . Within all of us lies the seed of truth. In our desires and selfish preoccupations we disregard it . . . Psychic guidance doesn't mean a wall of protection surrounding one's entire future . . . The laws of cause and effect are always operative, even if unknown to both psychic and client . . . Yet a psychic reading can often reveal positive potentialities which are within reach of the client. If only the client could have such insight and follow-through. We can offset adverse circumstances revealed in a psychic reading provided we change our course of direction, become flexible in our wants, do our best knowing that we have and let the rest take its own natural course of events.

Karma—Crystallized

Dr. Martello's concluding remarks suggest available means of "mitigating" Karma. If an individual does not wish to change either his point of view or his "course of direction," the Karma becomes, so to say "absolute"—more or less as H. P. Blavatsky explains in *The Secret Doctrine* I, 639:

> Those who believe in *Karma* have to believe in *destiny*, which, from birth to death, every man is weaving thread by thread around himself, as a spider does his cobweb. The stern and implacable *law of compensation* steps in and takes its course, faithfully following the fluctuations. When the last strand is woven, and man is seemingly enwrapped in the net-work of his own doing, then he finds himself completely under the empire of this self-made destiny. It then either fixes him like the inert shell against the immovable rock, or carries him away like a feather in a whirlwind raised by his own actions, and this is—KARMA.